

**O**hio ranks 15th in the nation for ATV accidents. Yearly, an estimated 40,000 emergency-room cases are reported nationwide; one third of all injuries are to children less than 16 years of age. The state has developed strategies and programs to reduce injuries and deaths related to careless, inappropriate and risky ATV use.

The goal of the 4-H Community ATV Safety Program is to increase the practice of safe behaviors and attitudes among the youth who operate ATVs. Additional emphasis must be placed on helping adults make informed decisions about whether or not young people in their care should operate an ATV.

Safe ATV riding depends on the rider's ability to recognize hazardous riding conditions. It is possible to determine how safe a ride will be by first evaluating the rider's personal abilities, the ATV capabilities, and then the terrain and environmental conditions.

**It is not enough to just ride safely!** There are certain laws that apply to riders. The following Ohio laws were created to provide an understanding between ATV riders and enforcement officers concerning the proper way to act while riding off-road. These laws protect people, property and the sport of ATV riding.

### **Operator's license**

In order to operate an ATV on any public land, waters or highways, one must hold a current motor vehicle driver's or commercial driver's license, motorcycle operator's endorsement or probationary license.

No person under 16 years of age shall operate an ATV on any land other than private property unless accompanied by a parent or guardian who is a licensed driver 18 years of age or older.

### **Although not recommended by the 4-H ATV Safety Program, Ohio law permits ATV operators to:**

- operate off and alongside a street or road for limited distances from the point of unloading to the point of the intended operating pathway.
- operate on the berm or shoulder of a road when the terrain permits such operation to be undertaken safely and without the necessity of entering any traffic lane.
- cross a highway whenever the crossing can be made safely and will not interfere with the movement of traffic in any direction, and provided the operator yields the right-of-way to any approaching traffic.



### **Ohio law states that ATVs shall not be operated as follows:**

- **Do not operate** on any limited access highway or take the right-of-way thereof, except for emergencies.
- **Do not operate** on any private property, in any nursery, or on any farm ground without permission of the owner.
- **Do not operate** on any land or iced-over waters controlled by the state, except at those locations where a sign has been posted permitting such operation.
- **Do not operate** on the tracks or right-of-way of any operating railroad.
- **Do not operate** while transporting any firearm, bow or other implement for hunting that is not unloaded and securely encased.
- **Do not operate** for the purpose of chasing, capturing or killing any animal or waterfowl.
- **Do not operate** during the time from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, unless there is a properly operating lighting system on the ATV.
- **Do not operate** while riding under the influence of drugs or alcohol on public lands. It is possible for the courts to suspend one's drivers license if found operating an ATV while under the influence. You may also be subject to fines, lawyer fees and possible jail time.



**Future opportunities for exciting travel with your recreation vehicle are in your hands. Take the pledge to tread lightly by:**

- T**raveling only where motorized vehicles are permitted
- R**especting the rights of hikers, skiers, campers, and others to enjoy their activities undisturbed
- E**ducating yourself by obtaining travel maps and regulations from public agencies, complying with signs and barriers, and asking owners' permission to cross private property
- A**voiding streams, lakeshores, meadows, muddy roads and trails, steep hillsides, wildlife and livestock.
- D**riving responsibly to protect the environment and preserve opportunities to enjoy your vehicle on wild lands.

**ATV rider training courses are offered through the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America. Ask your local dealer about the program.**

**For information about the 4-H ATV safety program, contact your local county office of Ohio State University Extension.**



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# ATVs in Ohio



**All-Terrain Vehicles:  
Laws, Regulations and  
Rules to Ride By**

